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ISSUE 28

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BATTLEFIELD™

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TAKING THE BATTLE TO THE STREETS

PREVIEWS

SPLATOON

DEAD ISLAND 2

REVIEW

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA:
MAJORA'S MASK 3D

STRATEGY

POKÉMON POKÉDEX

10 SECRETS

of EVOLVE

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WILD HUNT POSTER INSIDE





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cover story

BATTLEFIELD: HARDLINE 34

EA's legendary military shooter trades its tanks for police cruisers in *Battlefield Hardline*. We'll tell you how cops and robbers are breathing new life into the series.



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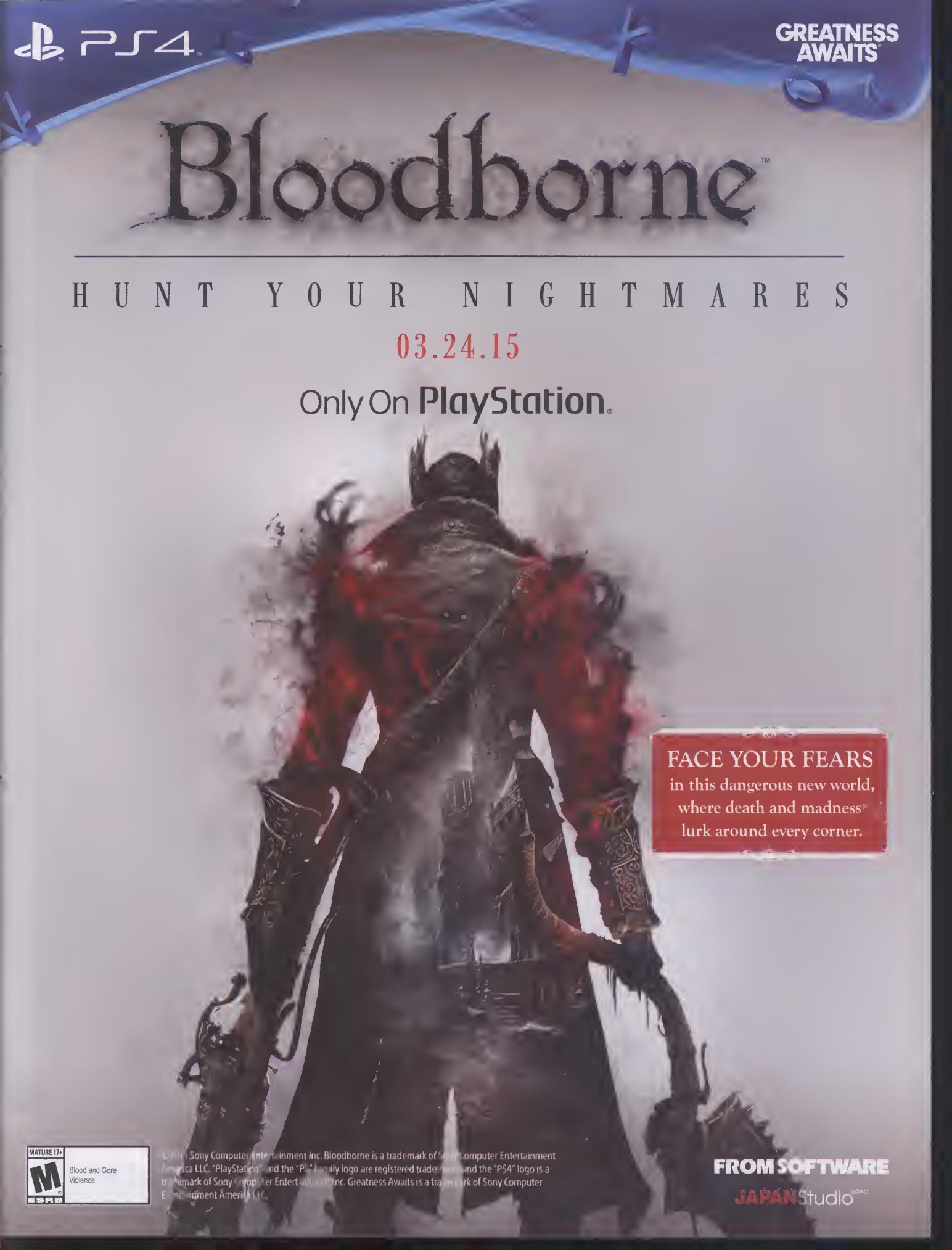
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FROM SOFTWARE

JAPAN Studio

welcome

FROM THE PUBLISHER



A SPRING OF SURPRISES

Gamers love surprises, be they Easter eggs hidden in games or walking into the store and bumping into something unexpected. To that end, we are seeing, as spring 2015 approaches, a surge of unexpected announcements and releases that should make even the most jaded gamer happy.

When Nintendo's New 3DS was released last year in Asia and Europe, there was no indication of when it might arrive in the U.S. As it turns out, Nintendo astonished everyone by releasing it, with the highly anticipated *Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* remake, on Feb. 13 with very little notice.

Are you wondering why you haven't read much about this new system in Walmart GameCenter magazine? The surprise caught us off guard, so that we didn't have time to give it a proper preview before its release.

The good news is, this excellent new handheld is available for everyone, and as you can see in our review on page 46, the *Majora's Mask* remake is the perfect game to show off the New 3DS' fantastic new 3D screen and second analog stick.

Feb. 13 also brought to store shelves *Monster Hunter 4 Ultimate* for 3DS, an absolutely massive game that will surely satisfy fans through the remaining cold months and well into the summer. If you're looking

for a deep and exciting game to play on the go, *Monster Hunter 4 Ultimate* will more than fill the bill.

Another big surprise is how well Nintendo's line of amiibos has been selling. While *Skylanders* and *Disney Infinity* demonstrated that people enjoy using toys to interact with their games, nobody was ready for the popularity of the amiibos.

Nintendo's figures are flying off the shelves, and not just the obvious Mario and Zelda ones. When the company announced characters such as Marth, the Wii Fit Trainer and the Villager from *Animal Crossing* would only see one production run, they quickly sold out and started commanding high prices on the secondary market.

Keep that in mind the next time you hear about an amiibo you might want, and be sure to get down to your local Walmart early to make sure you don't miss out.

From what we've seen so far, it looks like 2015 is going to be an amazing year in video games. With more big announcements coming, and E3 right around the corner, we couldn't be more excited.

So be sure to keep reading Walmart GameCenter magazine so we can keep you at the center of everything gaming.

STEVE HARRIS
PUBLISHER

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LEGO NINJAGO

SHADOW of RONIN



Cartoon Violence

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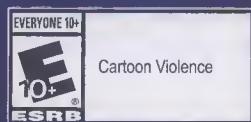
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Cartoon Violence

GAME ON!

GAMING NEWS, NUMBERS, AND GOSSIP

BY ERIC L. PATTERSON



GEARBOX SOFTWARE ALL BUT ANNOUNCES BORDERLANDS 3

Sure, *Borderlands: The Handsome Collection* is coming to PS4 and Xbox One in March, bundling *Borderlands 2*, *The Pre-Sequel*, and all their respective downloadable content. It's a steal, to be sure. While that might provide a quick fix for some loot addicts — and although *The Pre-Sequel* is only a few months old — most are ready to move on to something more substantial.

Well, Gearbox has some (mostly) good news for you: The studio is, in co-founder and CEO Randy Pitchford's words, "ready to start the next big *Borderlands* game," the man himself announced during a panel at the first-ever PAX South in San Antonio, Texas. All it needs to get started is a dozen or so new hires: an animation programmer here, a lead level designer there, maybe a creative director to keep everyone focused and on task. There are presently some 20 positions open on the company's job-listings page, including an art director and game designer (in addition to the three previously mentioned gigs, plus an assortment of others). However, not all of these open seats are for *Borderlands 3*; several are assigned to the studio's current project, *Battleborn*.

One key position Gearbox brass are looking to fill, however, is a weaver of fiction and funnies to sling together questionably sane musings for Pandora's populace. On Jan. 30, *Borderlands 2* lead writer Anthony Burch, crafter of such crack-ups as Handsome Jack's "pony made of diamonds,"

announced on Twitter that he was leaving Gearbox to work alongside *Video Game High School* co-creator and co-director Freddie Wong on a half-hour Hulu series about life behind the scenes during the filming of Freddie's shorts.

"There's a not-insignificant chance I'll fall on my face and be back at Gearbox in six months, so don't be surprised if that happens," Burch also posted on Twitter.

While Burch's future, in his eyes, might not be certain, and little else about the would-be *Borderlands 3* is — including half the people working on what Pitchford refers to as "the big one" and whatever being "the big one" means for a *Borderlands* game (presumably, lots more loot — if such a thing is even possible), there is one concrete detail: It won't be on Xbox 360 or PS3. During an earnings call following up on the company's quarterly financial report, Karl Slatoff, president of Take-Two Interactive (owner of 2K Games, which publishes the *Borderlands* series) stated that Gearbox Software is developing *Borderlands 3* "specifically for next-gen consoles."

Of course, our best guess sees *Borderlands 3* arriving, at best, in 2017. Gearbox still needs to ship *Battleborn*, and the studio hasn't even started development yet. A cross-gen release that far out would only ever hold the new entry back.

BY THE NUMBERS

60 The frames per second Ninja Theory's *DmC: Devil May Cry* will run at in 1080p when *Definitive Edition* drops March 17th

28-24 The final score between the New England Patriots and the Seattle

Seahawks in Super Bowl XLIX, which *Madden NFL 15* accurately predicted

49:55 The amount of minutes and seconds it took German speedrunner "Kahmul78" to beat *Dark Souls* and set the new world record

2,225,939 How many matches were played during the *Evolve* open beta on Xbox One in January (the

equivalent of playing *Evolve* eight hours a day for 126 years)



MARIO PARTY 10™

AVAILABLE 3/20/15



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Wii U GamePad included with Wii U system. Game, system, and amiibo figures sold separately. Figures shown not actual size and designs may vary. Compatibility and functionality of amiibo may vary per game. Visit amiibo.com for specific details on how each amiibo works. This game allows you to save game data on the amiibo figure. Game data must be deleted before saving data from another amiibo compatible game. © 2015 Nintendo. Mario Party and Wii U are trademarks of Nintendo.

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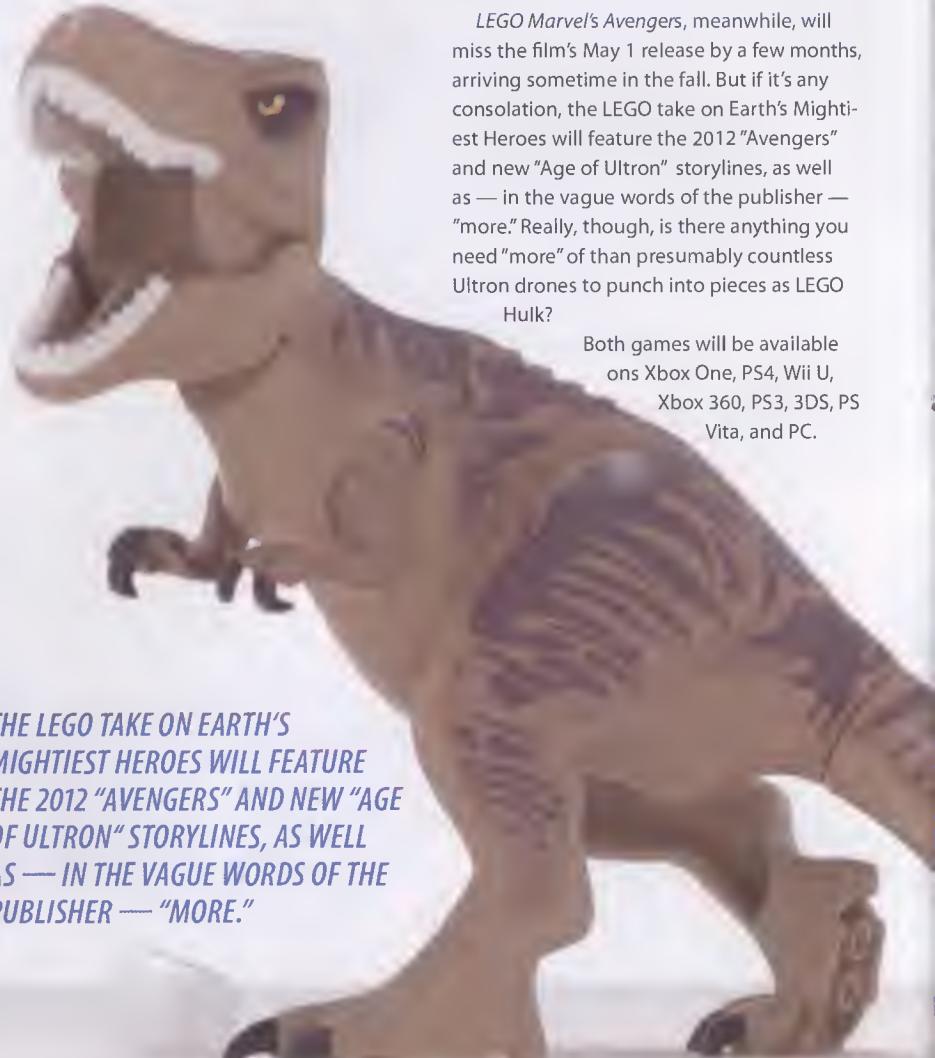
LEGO JURASSIC WORLD AND LEGO MARVEL'S AVENGERS ASSEMBLING LATER THIS YEAR

If your appreciation for genetically reconstituted dinosaurs and/or Marvel's immensely popular superhero all-star team has remained unfulfilled because of a lack of LEGO interpretations of either, Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment is about to make your 2015 one for the books: *LEGO Jurassic World* and *LEGO Marvel's Avengers* are coming to PC, consoles, and handhelds later this year.

LEGO Jurassic World is scheduled to arrive in June (June 12, to be precise), the same month the film it's based on hits theaters. The game includes the storylines from all three previous "Jurassic Park" films — 1993's "Jurassic Park," 1997's "The Lost World: Jurassic Park," and 2001's "Jurassic Park III" — plus the new flick starring Chris Pratt ("Guardians of the Galaxy," "Parks and Recreation"). Prepare to run in terror from a blocky, angular Indominus rex — until its lower jaw comically falls off and the fourth wall comes crumbling down in typical LEGO game fashion.



THE LEGO TAKE ON EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES WILL FEATURE THE 2012 "AVENGERS" AND NEW "AGE OF ULRON" STORYLINES, AS WELL AS — IN THE VAGUE WORDS OF THE PUBLISHER — "MORE."



LEGO Marvel's Avengers, meanwhile, will miss the film's May 1 release by a few months, arriving sometime in the fall. But if it's any consolation, the LEGO take on Earth's Mightiest Heroes will feature the 2012 "Avengers" and new "Age of Ultron" storylines, as well as — in the vague words of the publisher — "more." Really, though, is there anything you need "more" of than presumably countless Ultron drones to punch into pieces as LEGO Hulk?

Both games will be available on Xbox One, PS4, Wii U, Xbox 360, PS3, 3DS, PS Vita, and PC.

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MARCH

DMC: DEFINITIVE EDITION
CAPCOM / XBOX ONE, PS4

10



CODE NAME: S.T.E.A.M.
NINTENDO / 3DS

13



BATTLEFIELD: HARDLINE
EA / XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, PC

17



FINAL FANTASY TYPE-0 HD
SQUARE ENIX / PS4, XBOX ONE

17



MARIO PARTY 10
NINTENDO / WII U

20



BLOODBORNE
SCEA / PS4

24



KEN LEVINE'S SLY SCI-FI TEASES, HOPE THAT DESTINY DLC PLEASES, AND WISHFUL SOLID SNAKE RELEASES

Take your seats and settle down, kid-dies. Ol' Professor Q is here lay down all the latest rumors from the the industry luminaries you wish you could friend on Facebook. Take our old pal Ken Levine, for example. If the deets from the well-bearded *BioShock* creator's tweets are to be believed, the as-yet-to-be-revealed project from his yet-to-be-named new studio at 2K will be "sci-fi-ish" in style and perhaps a little wild in how it unfolds. The man himself suggests that the traditional three-act that most videogames (and films, and TV shows) use isn't quite "relevant in what what we're doing." Instead, his super-secret sci-fi enterprise will be "heavily reliant on reusable 'LEGO' narrative and game systems, which are recombinable." The Q-Mann's got no clue what any of that means, but if it's anything like "The LEGO Movie," everything will be awesome! ... While Levine explores big ways to think small, the moon wizards at Bungie are finding smaller ways to think big and bring *Destiny* some much-needed substance. As far as the Q-Ster's concerned — and he's hardly alone — the shared-world shooter's first bit of downloadable content, *The Dark Below*, amounted to little more than a few new missions that managed to be even more grindy. Recently, someone with access to internal meetings at the one-time House of Halo went rogue with a camera phone, snapping a shot of a presentation outlining *Destiny*'s post-launch life and slipping it under my door in the dead of night. If the admittedly fuzzy photo is authentic (and it certainly seems to be), a major expansion possibly called *Comet: Plague of Darkness* will

get a full disc release this fall. With the help of my trusty supersleuth magnifying glass, I've deciphered what's in store for the loot-strewn shooter: Twelve new story missions, four new strikes, one new raid, and a whole new area to explore called the "Hive Ship." But Bungie's plans to beef up *Destiny* don't stop there! Q-Dude's state-of-the-art image-enhancement technology revealed mention of three new player subclasses and just as many weapon classes. These numbers might be off by a digit, but between expansion and two more DLC adventures in the same vein as *The Dark Below* — one that looks to be focused on the Vex, the other the Cabal — you can rest assured that Bungie plans to bolster its big-budget blockbuster as best it can before ushering in the inevitable sequel ... On the topic of big plans, or at least people who always seem to have 'em, everyone's favorite prank-puller and human enigma, Hideo Kojima, recently mentioned that he'd just love, love, love an open-world remake of the *Metal Gear Solid* that started them all—one that takes advantage of all the power under the PS4's hood. At the Taipei Game Show, our friends at Japan's premier gaming publication, *Famitsu*, overheard Snake Daddy — seen sporting his trademark stylish spectacles, as usual—mention how he'd love to re-experience Snake's Shadow Moses mission on PS4 but certainly couldn't commit to the project himself, what with *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain* and *Silent Hills* on his plate. Nor has any developer approached Konami's golden boy to handle the project in his stead. Could this be a call to action from the master of misdirection? 

WALMART'S TOP SELLERS

THIS MONTH'S TOP-SELLING VIDEOS GAMES ...

CALL OF DUTY: ADVANCED WARFARE
ACTIVISION
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

01

GRAND THEFT AUTO V
ROCKSTAR GAMES
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

02

DYING LIGHT
WBIE
XBOX ONE, PS4, PC

03

MADDEN NFL 15
EA SPORTS
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

04

NBA 2K15
2K
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

05

FAR CRY 4
UBISOFT
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

06

DESTINY
ACTIVISION
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

07

FIFA SOCCER 15
EA SPORTS
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

08

DRAGON AGE: INQUISITION
EA
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

09

WWE 2K15
2K
XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3

10

JUNE

BORDERLANDS: THE HANSDOME COLLECTION
2K/XBOX ONE, PS4

24

XENOBLADE CHRONICLES 3D
NINTENDO/3DS

10

BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT
WBIE/XBOX ONE, PS4, PC

02

LEGO: JURASSIC WORLD
WBIE/PS4, XBOX ONE, WII U, PS3, XBOX 360, 3DS, VITA

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MLB 15: THE SHOW
SCE/PS4, PS3, PS VITA

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MORTAL KOMBAT X
WBIE/XBOX ONE, PS4, XBOX 360, PS3, PC

14



09

SPRING 2015

0

APRIL

DARK SOULS II: SCHOLAR OF THE FIRST SIN
XBOX ONE, PS4

07

THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT
WBIE/XBOX ONE, PS4, PC

19

THE ELDER SCROLLS ONLINE: TRAMRIEL UNLIMITED
BETHESOA/XBOX ONE, PS4

09

YOSHI'S WOOLY WORLD
NINTENDO/WII U

tbd

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BETHESOA/XBOX ONE, PS4

19

THE ELDER SCROLLS ONLINE: TRAMRIEL UNLIMITED
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XBOX ONE

PS4

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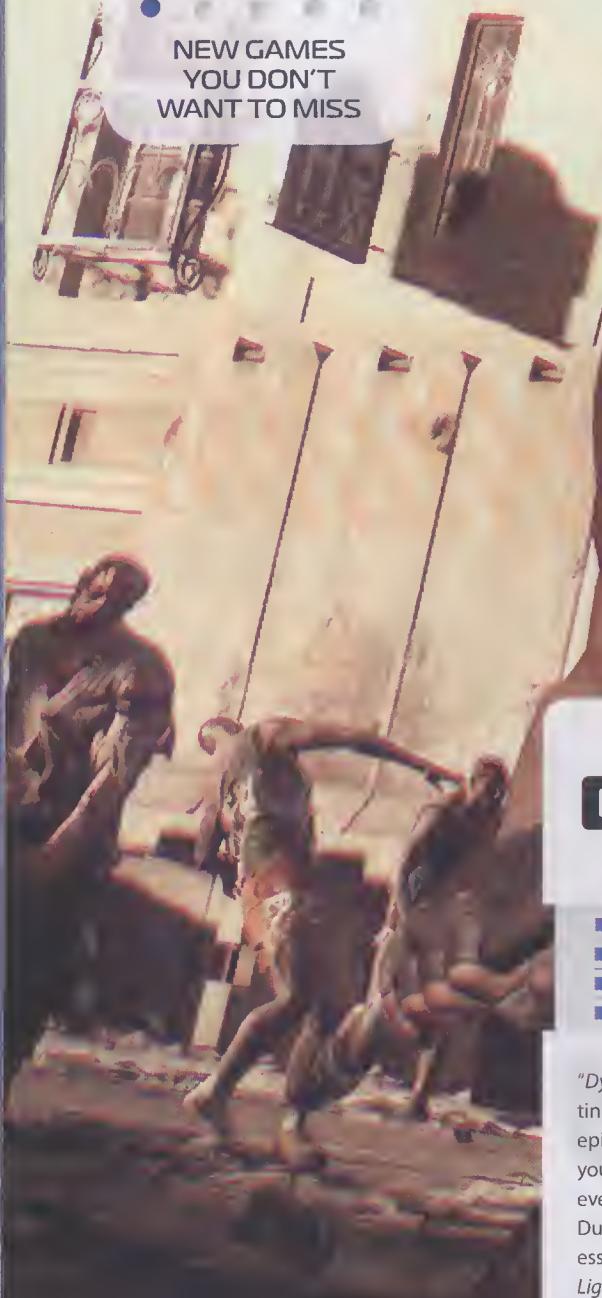
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5

to PLAY

- NEW GAMES YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS



DYING LIGHT

1

- PUBLISHER WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT
- DEVELOPER TECHLAND
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
- RELEASE DATE 01.27.2015

"*Dying Light* is a first-person action-survival game. You're dropped inside a modern, quarantined city with a mission to find a man who holds the key to finding a cure for the zombie epidemic that's ravaged the city. There are a couple of things that make it stand out. First, you can traverse the environment with parkour. You can climb any building and jump on every wall. There's also a day/night cycle that constantly changes the game's dynamics. During the day, you can prowl the city with relative confidence. But when night falls, you essentially become the prey, because your enemies are more aware and powerful. *Dying Light* also gives you more options to solving problems than just hacking and slashing your way through hordes of zombies. Each problem has at least a couple of solutions, and only a few involve fighting, which makes this a more complex game."

—TYMON SMEKALA, PRODUCER, TECHLAND

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SQUARE ENIX

5 to PLAY

to PLAY

• • • •



SAINTS ROW IV: RE-ELECTED & SAINTS ROW: GAT OUT OF HELL

2

■ PUBLISHER DEEP SILVER

■ DEVELOPER DS VOLITION

■ PLATFORMS RE-ELECTED XBOX ONE, PS4 GAT OUT OF HELL XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3, PC

■ RELEASE DATE 01.20.2015

"The games in the *Saints Row* series each feature a city filled with tons of open-world content to uncover, dominate, and conquer. But what makes the series unique is its irreverent tone, poking fun at other games, celebrating pop culture, and moving the characters through crazy situations that are impossible to find in other games. With *Re-Elected*, you get all of *Saints Row IV*, all of the mission and costume packs we added, as well as improved framerate, resolution, and the addition of voice commands for ease of use. As for *Gat out of Hell*, it's a standalone game that features a brand-new city, new themed weapons, and a special musical number. But no Meatloaf."

—KATHERINE NELSON, SENIOR ASSOCIATE PRODUCER, DS VOLITION

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XBOX ONE



PS4



PC DVD-ROM

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CD PROJEKT RED®



5
to PLAY

KIRBY AND THE RAINBOW CURSE

3

- PUBLISHER NINTENDO
- DEVELOPER NINTENDO
- PLATFORMS WII U
- RELEASE DATE 02.20.2015

"Mysterious clouds have appeared in the sky and drained all the colors from Pop Star. A cute rainbow paintbrush named Elline appears and explains to Kirby and the Waddle Dees that the witch artist Claycia stole the colors to use for her creation. With Elline's help, Kirby and the Waddle Dees set off to return all the colors to Pop Star. The latest entry in the *Kirby* franchise is different from most other *Kirby* adventures. In this one, players guide Kirby through a vibrant world by drawing rainbow ropes for him to roll along. Controlling Kirby is as easy as drawing on the Wii U GamePad touchscreen and tapping Kirby to attack enemies and obstacles. Between the colorful graphics, the easy-to-pick-up multiplayer, the fun GamePad controls, and the cool new transformations, *Kirby and the Rainbow Curse* is a unique experience for fans of the Pink Puffball.

—ERIK PETERSON, PRODUCT MARKETING MANAGER, NINTENDO OF AMERICA

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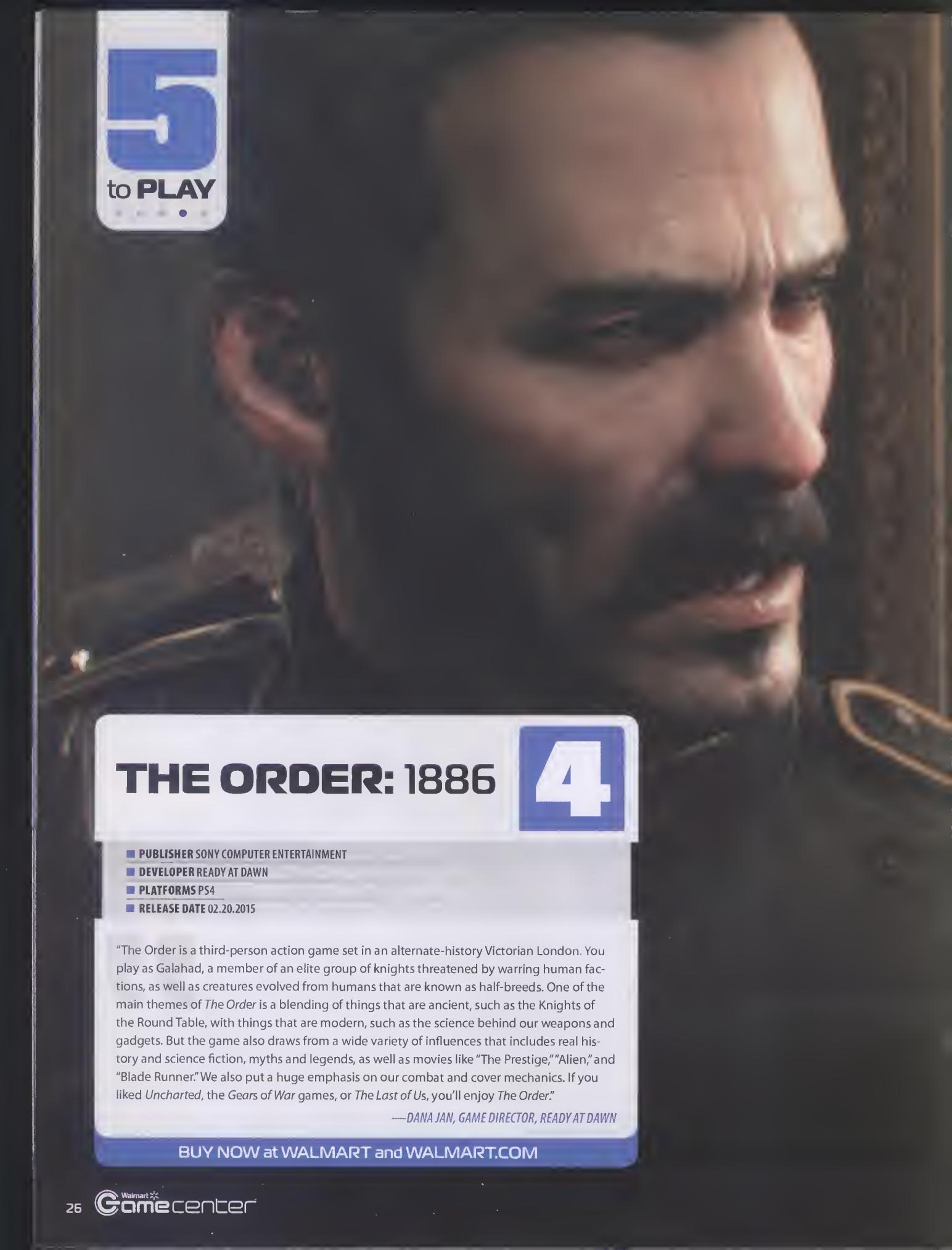
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MONSTER HUNTER 4
ULTIMATE



**5****to PLAY**

THE ORDER: 1886

4

- PUBLISHER SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT
- DEVELOPER READY AT DAWN
- PLATFORMS PS4
- RELEASE DATE 02.20.2015

"The Order is a third-person action game set in an alternate-history Victorian London. You play as Galahad, a member of an elite group of knights threatened by warring human factions, as well as creatures evolved from humans that are known as half-breeds. One of the main themes of *The Order* is a blending of things that are ancient, such as the Knights of the Round Table, with things that are modern, such as the science behind our weapons and gadgets. But the game also draws from a wide variety of influences that includes real history and science fiction, myths and legends, as well as movies like "The Prestige," "Alien," and "Blade Runner." We also put a huge emphasis on our combat and cover mechanics. If you liked *Uncharted*, the *Gears of War* games, or *The Last of Us*, you'll enjoy *The Order*."

—DANA JAN, GAME DIRECTOR, READY AT DAWN

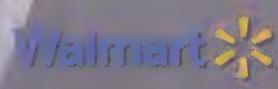
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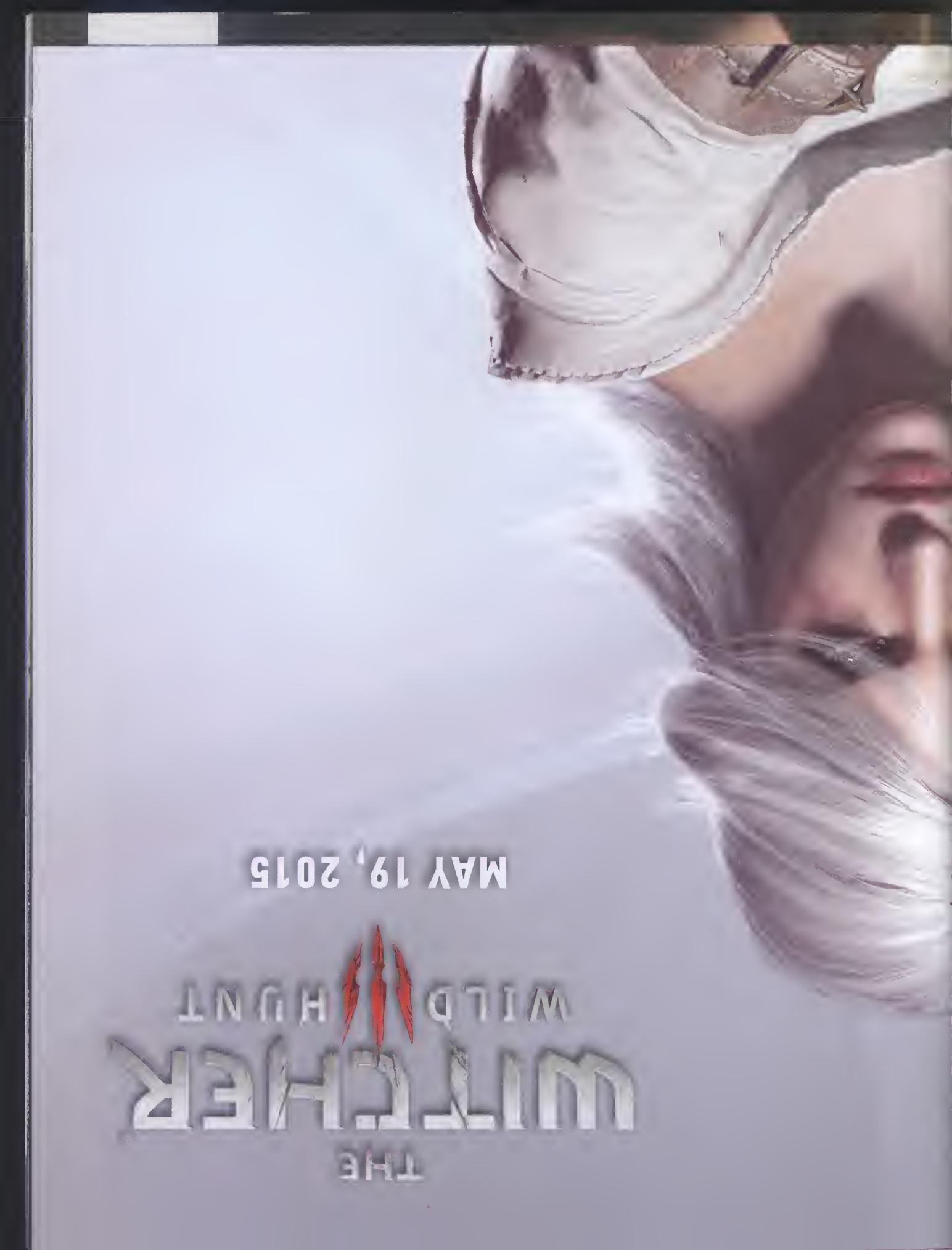
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PC DVD-ROM



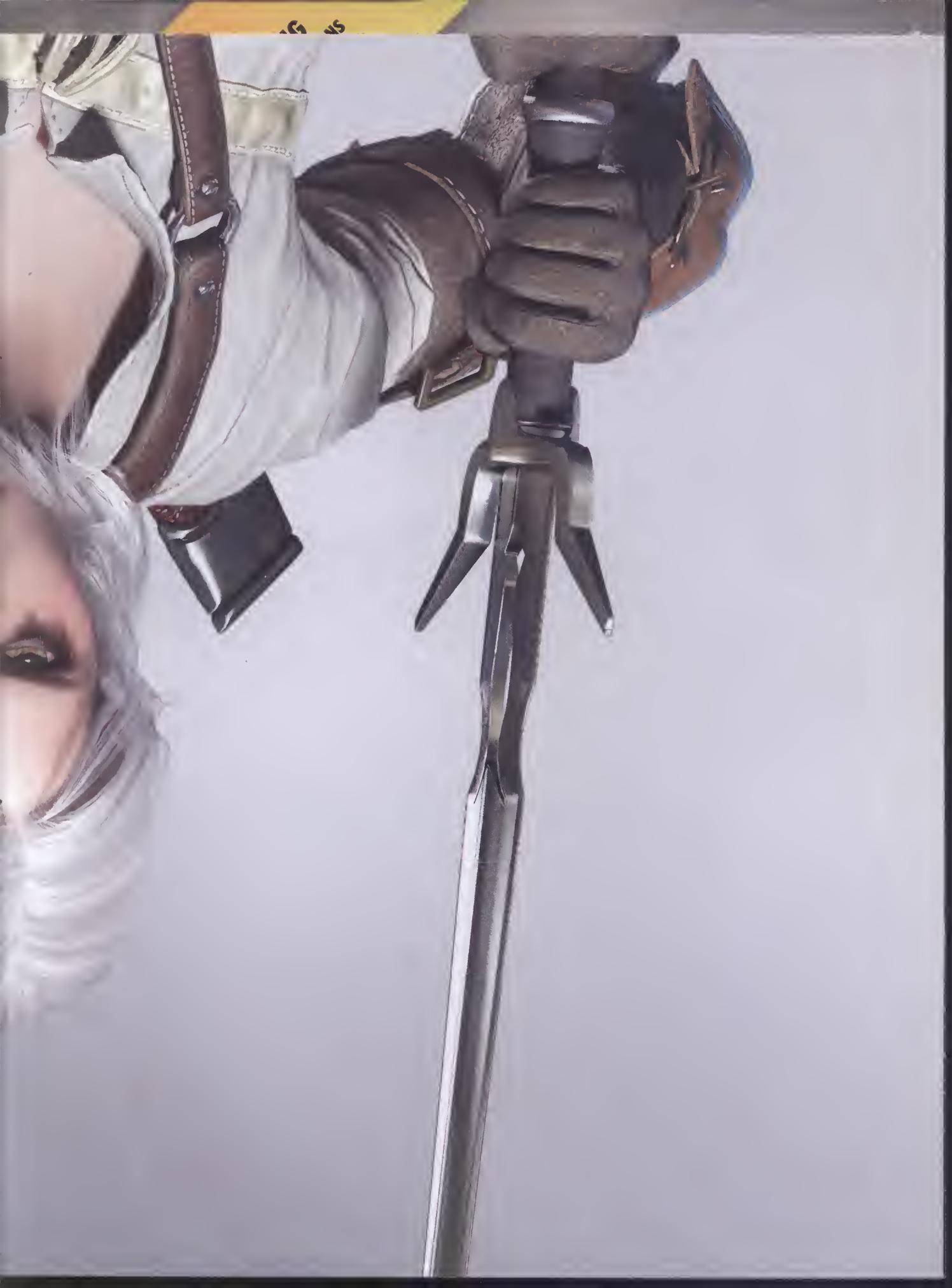
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THE WILDER HUNT





Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Nudity
Strong Language
Strong Sexual Content
Use of Alcohol

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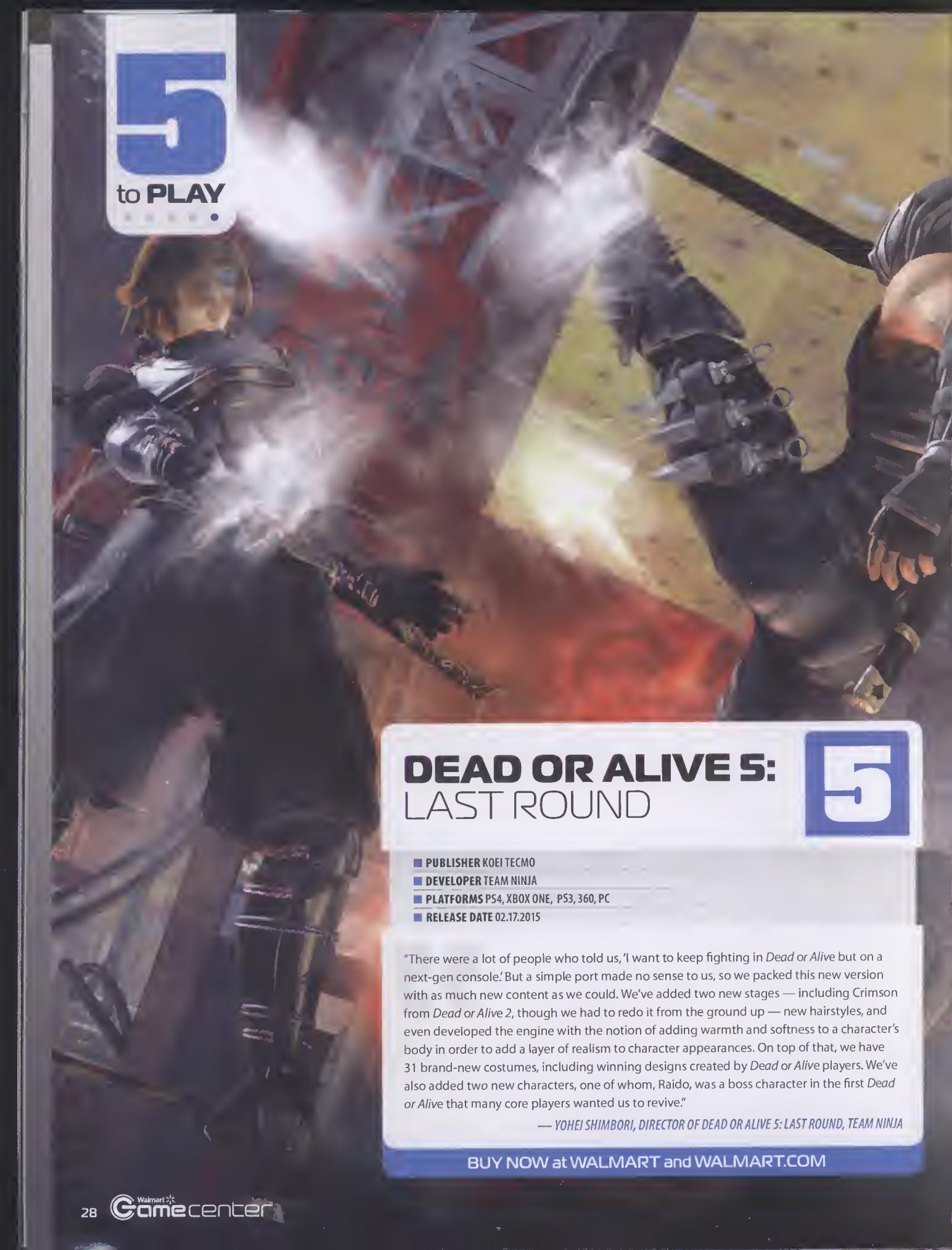
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**5****to PLAY**

DEAD OR ALIVE 5: LAST ROUND

5

- PUBLISHER KOEI TECMO
- DEVELOPER TEAM NINJA
- PLATFORMS PS4, XBOX ONE, PS3, 360, PC
- RELEASE DATE 02.17.2015

"There were a lot of people who told us, 'I want to keep fighting in *Dead or Alive* but on a next-gen console!' But a simple port made no sense to us, so we packed this new version with as much new content as we could. We've added two new stages — including Crimson from *Dead or Alive 2*, though we had to redo it from the ground up — new hairstyles, and even developed the engine with the notion of adding warmth and softness to a character's body in order to add a layer of realism to character appearances. On top of that, we have 31 brand-new costumes, including winning designs created by *Dead or Alive* players. We've also added two new characters, one of whom, Raido, was a boss character in the first *Dead or Alive* that many core players wanted us to revive."

— YOHEI SHIMBORI, DIRECTOR OF DEAD OR ALIVE 5: LAST ROUND, TEAM NINJA

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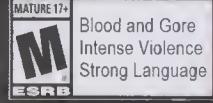
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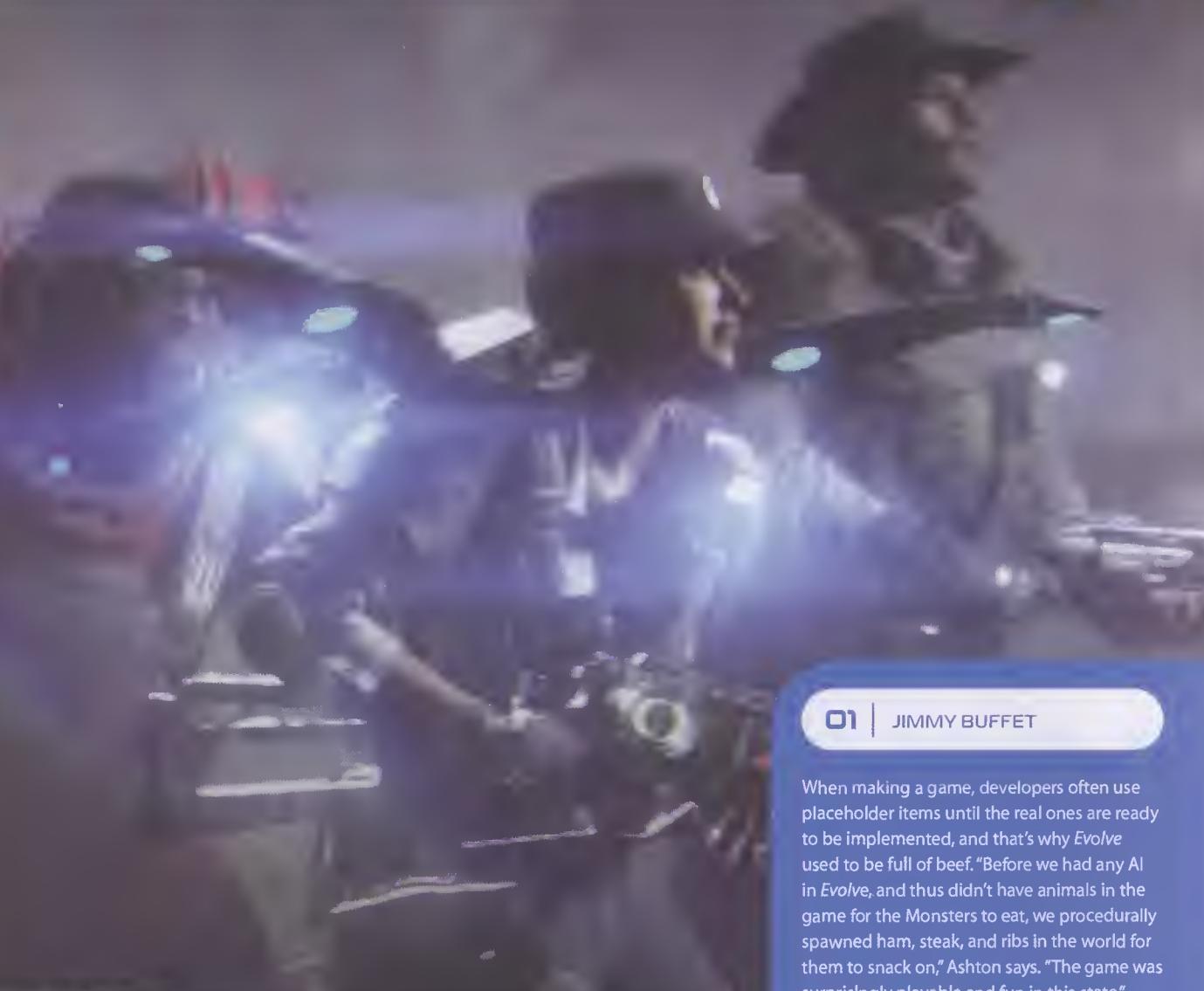
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10 SECRETS of EVOLVE



BY PAUL SEMEL

In the sci-fi shooter *Evolve*, four player-controlled Hunters have to chase a big Monster that a fifth player controls. The influences of the *Left 4 Dead* games, as well as the *Predator* and *Alien* movies, seem obvious, but other factors had an effect, as well. According to the good people at Turtle Rock Studios who created it — design director Chris Ashton, designer Clancy Powell, community manager Jess Damerst, and QA testers Carmelo Consiglio, Dylan Santizo, and Erika Wehrly — hunger was the biggest inspiration in its design.

01 | JIMMY BUFFET

When making a game, developers often use placeholder items until the real ones are ready to be implemented, and that's why *Evolve* used to be full of beef. "Before we had any AI in *Evolve*, and thus didn't have animals in the game for the Monsters to eat, we procedurally spawned ham, steak, and ribs in the world for them to snack on," Ashton says. "The game was surprisingly playable and fun in this state."



02 | VOICE TO THE VOICELESS

Along the same lines, developers typically record temporary dialogue before the real voice actors are hired. But in the case of *Evolve*, the developers didn't just voice people. As Damerst explains, "Stephen Oakley, who's a concept artist at Turtle Rock, was the temporary voice for many characters and some wildlife as well. He's famous in the studio for making bizarre noises during the day, especially during playtests."



03 | WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

In addition to serving as temporary voice actors, *Evolve*'s developers also pulled into the script some lines that people in the studio often say. "When playing Dungeons & Dragons with the testers, writer Matthew Colville used to say, 'There's definitely a very slim chance we'll survive! a lot,'" Wehrly says. "So, we put it in the game. What the testers didn't know was that it's a quote from 'Ghostbusters. It's actually one of the only movie quotes in the entire game because, normally, Matthew is philosophically opposed to quoting pop culture."

04 | THE SEARCH IS OVER

As happens in so many games, different modes in *Evolve* have changed over time. But just like we still discover dinosaur bones, you can still find remnants of those levels hidden in the game. "In Hunt Mode, the Monster used to have to kill a handful of survivors after bringing down the Power Relay," Consiglio says. "This was removed for a couple reasons, but if you look really close on certain levels, you can still kind of see the bunkers where the survivors hid out."

05 | YOU CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE ...

Game designers have to include animations for when a character perishes. But before these animations were installed in *Evolve*, fallen Hunters would turn into cupcakes. Says Ashton, "Getting those animation systems up and running was going to take a fair amount of time and we needed to playtest the game as soon as possible, so our temporary solution was that dead Hunters would turn into cupcakes that the Monster could eat." Can you imagine if cupcakes were still hidden somewhere in the game?



06 | FALL ON ME

As you might know, your height can effect how badly you're hurt in a fall. A 6-foot person falling off a 6-foot ledge suffer more serious injuries than, say, a 260-foot Japanese lizard falling off that same 6-foot ledge. Even though you know this, someone forgot to tell the Monster in *Evolve*. "Evolve originally had fall damage and the farther you fell, the more damage you took," Ashton says. "But this calculation didn't take player size into account, so if the Monster dropped off a 30-foot cliff, it would die from the injuries, leaving the Hunters to wonder how they'd managed to win the game without ever seeing their opponent. So, we took fall damage out."

07 | JETPACK JOYRIDE

As both the O'Jays and the Kinks suggested, sometimes you have to give the people what they want. That's actually how everyone in *Evolve* got jetpacks. "At one point in time, players had to choose between a jetpack, bionic legs, or health kits. But everyone took jetpacks all the time, so we caved and made jetpacks standard equipment," Ashton says.



08 | MUTUAL OF OMAHA'S WILD KINGDOM

As we mentioned, numerous animals are running around *Evolve*. But they don't just sit there, watching you do your thing. "Some animals will eat their kills, and some animals will eat your kill as well," Wehrly says. "I learned that the hard way when I was playing as a Monster and put a bunch of my kills nearby so that I could eat them to get armor when I came out of my cocoon. But when I did, I found that all of my kills were gone, because a Dune beetle had eaten them."



09 | ROUGH BOYS

In *Evolve*, the Hunter named Maggie often talks about how her home planet of Factor is a violent place. "If you keep listening to Maggie's conversations on the dropship, you'll learn more about her past," Santizo says. "What's funny is that, for a while, there was a bug that made her say 'Factor was a rough colony' every time she spoke, and it drove us on the QA team insane for a few days."

10 | MMM ... DONUTS!

Lest you think we were done providing food facts, we've got one more. "During development, the studio



[staff] consumed more than 200 donuts every Friday," Powell says. When asked why, he replies, "I think the real question, is 'Why not donuts and why not Fridays?' It's a nice thing to have a donut on the morning of the last work day of the week. It's a little something to look forward to throughout the week. And thirty dozen every Friday meant that there were enough donuts for everyone to get one."

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Animated Blood
Fantasy Violence
Suggestive Themes

COVER STORY

BATTLEFIELD HARDLINE

I FOUGHT THE LAW

BY JOSH HARMON

- PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
- DEVELOPER VISCERAL GAMES
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3, PC
- RELEASE DATE 03.17.2015



C1135

As one of the longest-running and most successful military shooter franchises, *Battlefield* has explored plenty of diverse settings over the last decade: World War II, Vietnam, modern combat, even the 22nd century. With the upcoming *Battlefield Hardline*, however, the series is poised to make its biggest shift yet, thanks to a new developer at the helm and a new theme that ditches camo-clad soldiers and heavy armor for the gritty world of cops and criminals.

The new team behind *Hardline* is Visceral Games, best known for its work on the popular *Dead Space* series. While this may be its first time leading a game with such a strong focus on competitive play, lead multiplayer designer Thaddeus Sasser makes it clear the developers have done their homework. "We worked with [longtime *Battlefield* developer] DICE in Stockholm for a good year and a half, trying to wrap our heads around what *Battlefield* is," he says. "We learned how to build maps and how to design vehicles and how to build weapons. I think that was instrumental laying the groundwork for figuring out what we wanted to keep the same and what we wanted to do differently in our cops-and-criminals setting."

That dedication looks to be paying off, as *Hardline*'s mix promises the best of *Battlefield*

with novel mechanics, such as tighter maps and quicker running speeds, and weapons: A stun gun lets cops incapacitate the bad guys; during the ensuing interrogation, the map highlights the locations of nearby enemies.

An abundance of new modes in *Hardline* offers an explosive blend of the series' trademark big-team gunplay with objectives ripped from your favorite crime movies. In Heist, for instance, robbers run their loot to an extraction point where they meet up with a helicopter, while the cops try their best to catch them. Blood Money, another addition, works off a similar premise, but both teams try to collect their share of the cash. The police want to save it as evidence, while the criminals plan how to enjoy the spoils.

"It goes directly back to kind of that cinematic-style experience — movies like *Heat* or movies like *The Town*," Sasser says. "That idea of pulling off the big score, of knocking over the hard target, is a core element of the cops-and-criminals fiction."

Then there's Hotwire. "To sum it up in three words: high-speed pursuit," Sasser says. To take advantage of *Hardline*'s abundance of new civilian rides such as muscle cars, this gametype flips the mechanics of the classic *Battlefield* mode Conquest, so capturing and holding vehicles becomes each team's objective.

Of course, the crime-fighting elephant in the room is that *Battlefield Hardline* was due out at the end of last year, not in March. Unlike with most delays, however, Visceral wasn't just

>





"WE WORKED WITH DICE IN STOCKHOLM FOR A GOOD YEAR AND A HALF, TRYING TO WRAP OUR HEADS AROUND WHAT BATTLEFIELD IS."

— THADDEUS SASSER, LEAD MULTIPLAYER DESIGNER



READY FOR PRIMETIME



Though online multiplayer remains the bread and butter of *Battlefield*, *Hardline* raises the bar in its single-player campaign, channeling TV crime dramas such as "True Detective" and "Justified" in its tale of detective Nick Mendoza, a cop seeking revenge against those who've wronged him. Why the TV slant? "People always talk about video games being like film," says Steve Papoutsis, Visceral studio



"WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A REALLY FUN WRAPPER FOR A COPS-AND-CRIMINALS-STYLE GAME"

— STEVE PAPOUTSIS, VISCERAL STUDIO GM AND HARDLINE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

GM and *Hardline* executive producer. "For us, video games are actually a little bit more like TV. They're longer than films, and they roll out over the course of levels, which are very similar to episodes, if you think of them that way. We started just really looking at the way that medium was doing things, and we thought it would be a really fun wrapper for a cops-and-criminals-style game." In addition to levels structured around discrete, episodic arts, *Hardline* will also emphasize character-driven drama and borrow the previously/next-time-on teases that anyone who follows a show knows so well.



looking for more time to polish its original vision. Instead, developers wanted to expand it, incorporating suggestions from the first beta-test to make an even stronger playground for living out your cops-and-robbers fantasies.

"We started realizing, as we pored through all the feedback, that we didn't have a lot of time remaining in our development to actually get to everything," executive producer and studio general manager Steve Papoutsis says. In talking with Andrew Wilson, then newly appointed CEO of *Battlefield* publisher EA, about the responses, Papoutsis said they might not have the time to make as many changes as they'd like. Wilson suggested delaying the game a few months to ensure it was the best it could possibly be.

The changes Visceral has made in response to fan feedback are far from insignificant. The developers tweaked the rules of Heist to allow

the defending cops a better chance to come from behind. Classes were reworked to make more sense within the setting of the game, with different equipment and rebalanced tools that significantly change characters' roles from their military counterparts in the mainline series. On top of all that, of course, the extra time meant Visceral could put more effort into squashing bugs and ensuring release day would be as smooth as possible — an important task, given *Battlefield 4*'s somewhat shaky launch.

"We were excited to get that opportunity," Papoutsis says. "I think the game has improved dramatically because of it." In real life, the last thing you want is for the cops to show up late, but in the case of *Battlefield Hardline*, a brief delay may just wind up being the best possible outcome for the virtual 5-0. ☀



TURF WAR

GET TO KNOW THE LOCALES WHERE YOUR COPS-ANO-ROBBERS' EXPLOITS WILL PLAY OUT



DOWNTOWN



BANK JOB



THE BLOCK

Set among the towering skyscrapers of the Los Angeles city center, Downtown emphasizes verticality more than any other map in the game. Whether you're weaving a chopper between buildings, zip-lining off rooftops, or picking off unsuspecting drivers from the overpass, you'll need to keep your head on a swivel if you want to pull out the win.

Few images are quite as iconic in the world of crime fiction as the hefty bank vault door being cracked open, and Bank Job is more than happy to bring that backdrop to *Hardline*. As you'd expect, the map is a great fit for Heist mode, where a scramble to get the cash out quickly turns into an all-out battle in the surrounding streets reminiscent of the classic film, "Heat."

This stretch of L.A. storefronts and residential blocks would look right at home in a gritty cop film such as "Training Day" or "End of Watch," and they're every bit as dangerous in *Hardline*. As you weave between the alleyways, front yards, and interiors, be mindful of the corners and long sight lines, since the tight clusters of buildings make ambushes a constant threat.



DUST BOWL



GROWHOUSE



DERAILED

The abandoned desert town of Joad — a *Grapes of Wrath* allusion for you literary types — plays host to some of the most sprawling battles in *Hardline*, especially in and around the rundown motel at its center. Keep an eye on the horizon, though. Once that dust storm rolls in, you'll have a hard time seeing distant opponents through the haze.

The crooks have taken their illicit activities underground, setting up a compound beneath an industrial cleaning facility, creating multiple opportunities for interior shootouts and flanking. Don't be afraid to blow out a wall or two so you can make a surprise entrance on a room full of unsuspecting enemies. This is still *Battlefield*, after all.

With a sprawl of warehouses, scrapyards, and shipping hubs, the industrial east side of L.A. offers a relatively open and flat battleground. More importantly, though, it provides a stretch of the city's infamous concrete aqueducts, giving you a chance to reenact that ridiculous semi chase from "Terminator 2: Judgment Day." Hasta la vista, criminals.



HOLLYWOOD HEIGHTS



RIPTIDE



EVERGLADES

Let's hope whatever movie producer or celebrity power couple owns this posh Hollywood mansion has a whole lot of insurance, because that minimalist European sofa and those priceless paintings and are about to meet the business end of a whole lot of bullets — not to mention the brush fire the criminals set in the surrounding hills as a diversion.

Whoever said crime doesn't pay clearly hasn't seen this luxurious smuggler's compound on the Miami shore. While you might find yourself taken in by the seaside vistas, don't go breaking out the tropical drinks and miniature umbrellas just yet. Your opponents will be coming in fast from the surrounding islands, either by bridge or by water.

A nice change of pace from *Battlefield Hardline*'s mostly urban environments, this patch of Florida swamp keeps you on your toes. While you need to be on the lookout for water hazards and makeshift ramps here, be careful you don't get chomped on by a local gator, who doesn't much care which side of the law you're on.



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- PUBLISHER NINTENDO
- DEVELOPER NINTENDO
- PLATFORMS WII U
- RELEASE DATE 05.2015



SPLATOON

BLOTTING OUT THE SHOOTER COMPETITION

BY ANDREW FITCH

These days, Nintendo's best known for bringing the escapades of portly plumbers and pointy-eared, green-clad adventurers to the masses, it isn't exactly famous for pushing the shooter genre forward.

But it wasn't always that way. Back in the days of the Nintendo 64 in 1997, the company, with the help of the wizards at Rare, crafted one of the seminal shooters of all time: *GoldenEye 007*.

Eighteen years later, Nintendo's trying to revolutionize the shooter all over again — this time with its internal development team. And it's not the well-dressed spy-thriller style of James



NINTENDO'S TRYING TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE SHOOTER ALL OVER AGAIN — THIS TIME WITH ITS INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM



Bond and company that will take center stage here. Instead, *Splatoon* is all about squid people engaging in 4-on-4 online action.

Hold on a second. Squid people? What's up with that?

"Rather than designing the characters and then making a game around that, we instead came up with a game first and then created characters we thought would work well with the gameplay," producer Hisashi Nogami says. "That's actually how Nintendo prefers to approach game design."

So, how exactly do squid people make any sense in a shooter? Well, as it turns out, these characters, known as Inklings, make a whole lot of sense, actually.

"*Splatoon*'s all about controlling territory," Nogami says. "Teams battle to claim their turf by splattering the map with ink, and the team with the most territory when time runs out wins."

The Inklings don't just serve as cutesy mascot characters, though. Their unique design is integral to the *Splatoon* experience. Players will

be able to swim quickly through their own ink, while their feet will get stuck if they tread into enemy territory.

"Your first priority is shooting ink to expand your territory," director Yusuke Amano says.

"Once you've done that, you've got more turf to move through as a squid, where you can make use of your abilities."

These Inklings powers bring a surprising amount of strategy to the proceedings, a welcome break from muscle-bound marines who know nothing more than mindless, gun-toting explosions. This family-friendly fare will still manage to utterly enthrall even the most hardcore shooter fans.

With *Splatoon*, Nintendo seems to be primed to move the shooter beyond frat houses and testosterone-fueled parties, opening up the genre for a wide variety of players, regardless of background or skill level. It wouldn't be the first time Nintendo has won over the masses, and it won't be the first time it has revolutionized the industry. 



WEAPON OF CHOICE

You can't have a modern-day shooter without a lobby, and *Splatoon* won't be any different. How it will set itself apart, however, is with its sun-splashed style that incorporates an immense amount of customization. This, according to Nintendo of America director of product marketing Bill Trinen, is a "central hub that connects all the game modes together."



"YOU CAN CHECK OUT OTHER INKLINGS' OUTFITS AND EQUIPMENT IN THE PLAZA, TOO, SO IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO GET INSPIRED"

-- BILL TRINEN, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MARKETING, NINTENDO OF AMERICA

"At the shopping center, there's a weapon shop run by a militaristic crab and a head-gear shop where a shy sea anemone is working as a store clerk," he says. "There's also a clothing shop and a shoe shop."

Players shouldn't ignore their potential opponents traversing the lobby area, though. In fact, a good competitor studies every inch of other Inklings in *Splatoon*.

"You can check out other Inklings' outfits and equipment in the plaza, too, so it's a good place to get inspired," Trinen says.

"Try entering a battle with new clothes and equipment — you may just discover a new way to fight."

PUBLISHER DEEP SILVER
DEVELOPER YAGER DEVELOPMENT
PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC
RELEASE DATE 2015



DEAD ISLAND 2

FEAR AND MOANING IN LOS ANGELES

BY ERIC L. PATTERSON



When *Dead Island* invaded the videogaming world in 2011, it brought with it some fresh ideas on how to tackle first-person zombie survival. After crafting a pseudo-sequel in *Riptide*, series creator Techland moved on to give its work a parkour-focused spin in *Dying Light*, leaving the future of the *Dead Island* franchise in the hands of Yager Development.

Fear not, however. The team from Berlin has its own plans for taking the genre in new directions, a strategy evident throughout what we've seen so far of the upcoming official sequel, *Dead Island 2*.

One element Yager is really doubling down on is action — making it deeper, more intense, and even crazier than before. Players will have far more zombie threats and deadly scenarios to contend with this time around, but they'll also be better equipped to tackle whatever is thrown their way.

The weapon-crafting system that debuted in the original *Dead Island* will return once again, and this time, you can mod your creations with new additional properties, such as shotguns that freeze zombies with every blast or items that release pheromones to turn the undead against each other.

Even better? Characters can now dual-wield weapons, so you can rush into a horde of horrors with two guns blazing or take a more tactical approach to battles by mixing up long-range and melee options.

All the firepower to be found in Los Angeles (and the game's other real-world settings)

won't be enough to win the war against the walking dead, however. To do that, you'll need help — and *Dead Island 2* is going further than any of its predecessors when it comes to multiplayer. Now, up to eight players can band together, and they can do so seamlessly without needing to go through dedicated menus or modes.

That explosion you've spotted off in the distance? It could be a warning of some bigger menace that will soon bear down on you — or it could be a signal from a group of survivors that'll give you the backup you need to live another day in *Dead Island 2*. **G**

CHARACTERS CAN NOW DUAL-WIELD WEAPONS, SO YOU CAN RUSH INTO A HORDE OF HORRORS WITH TWO GUNS BLAZING.

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**GAME
OF THE
MONTH**

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK 3D

When *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* launched 15 years ago, it was an unexpected and ambitious follow-up to the universally beloved *Ocarina of Time*. Rather than continuing the story of Link's adventures in Hyrule, it plunged our green-tunic-clad hero into the new world of Termina, full of characters with tragic backstories, haunting locations, and a sinister-faced moon threatening to plunge out of orbit and destroy everything.

Most jarringly, the player was presented with a countdown of three in-game days — close to one hour in real time — to avert that apocalyptic ending. Of course, the game offered far more tasks than any player could complete in that time span. Instead, you made whatever progress you could, then played a special song on your ocarina to travel back to the beginning and repeat the cycle all over again with your newfound knowledge and equipment, like a video-game version of the movie *Groundhog Day*.

All those factors combined to make *Majora's Mask* a much bleaker and less accessible game than your average *Zelda*, which is why it was so surprising to hear that Nintendo would be releasing an updated version for the 3DS. Thankfully, its developers managed to revitalize the game





with a graphical overhaul and gameplay tweaks that make it much more comfortable for modern audiences without losing the edge that made it such a standout effort on the Nintendo 64 in 2000.

The biggest changes to the game are intended to make it much more convenient to play, and they work spectacularly well. In some respects, the original *Majora's Mask* was so obtuse that it seemed unlikely you'd discover everything without a strategy guide. Now, you have access to a full quest log that keeps track of people you've talked to, collectibles you're on track to discover, and hints as to where to go next. Even someone with no *Zelda* experience can likely hop in and master every corner of the game with little confusion, provided the player is willing to pay attention and use his head. Other improvements, such as being able to skip to ahead to a specific hour, do wonders for cutting down on the amount of time you'll be waiting for the clock to tick away.



THE BIGGEST CHANGES TO THE GAME ARE DESIGNED TO MAKE IT MUCH MORE CONVENIENT TO PLAY, AND THEY WORK SPECTACULARLY WELL.

The game includes plenty of other, less-integral updates as well. Boss fights have been reworked, some more exhaustively and more successfully than others. Link's special abilities while wearing the three transformation masks have been refined, mostly for the better, although swimming underwater wearing the Zora mask is still more of a hassle than it should be. This version also offers a handful of new minigames, reworked areas, and slight tweaks to the story progression. Generally, Nintendo has taken the lightest, smartest approach to updating this quirky classic.

The best thing you can say about the changes that have been worked into *Majora's Mask 3D* is that they'll only stand out to fans who are intimately familiar with the game. To those who have never played or have long forgotten the game's finer points, the changes will feel like a natural extension of the concept, an old game streamlined just enough that you might well mistake it for a new one. In the end, isn't that really the best you can ask for in a remaster of a game as great as this? ☺

rating

91%

GOLD

PUBLISHER NINTENDO

DEVELOPER NINTENDO

PLATFORMS 3DS

RELEASE DATE 02.13.2015

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Primal Reversion

Primal Groudon

Ground Fire

HEIGHT: 16'05" WEIGHT: 2204 lbs.

Gender unknown

REQUISITE ORB: Red Orb

Receive from Maxie in Sootopolis City (Pokémon Omega Ruby) / Receive from the old lady at the peak of Mt. Pyre (Pokémon Alpha Sapphire)

ABILITY: Desolate Land

STAT GROWTH RATES:

HP	★★
Attack	★★★★★
Defense	★★★★★
Sp. Atk	★★★★
Sp. Def	★★★★
Speed	★★★★

ITEMS

EGG GROUPS:

Damage taken in normal battles

Normal	1	Flying	1
Fire	>0.5	Psychic	1
Water	4	Bug	>0.5
Grass	1	Rock	1
Electric	0	Ghost	1
Ice	1	Dragon	1
Fighting	1	Dark	1
Poison	0.5	Steel	>0.5
Ground	2	Fairy	0.5

Damage taken in inverse battles

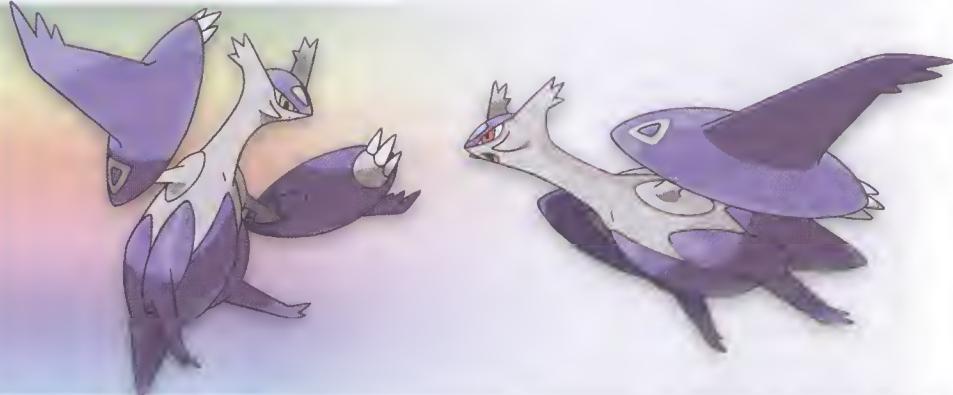
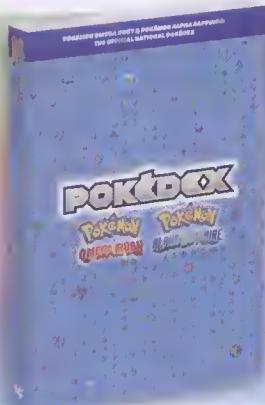
Normal	1	Flying	1
Fire	>2	Psychic	1
Water	0.25	Bug	2
Grass	1	Rock	1
Electric	2	Ghost	1
Ice	1	Dragon	1
Fighting	1	Dark	1
Poison	2	Steel	2
Ground	0.5	Fairy	2

Can be used in Inverse Battle

Random Matchup (Free Battle)



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Primal Reversion

Primal Kyogre

Sea Basin Pokémon

Water

HEIGHT: 32'02" WEIGHT: 948 lbs.
Gender unknown

REQUIRES: DRB

Blue Orb

Receive from the old lady at the peak of Mt. Pyre (Pokémon Omega Ruby) / Receive from Archie in Sootopolis City (Pokémon Alpha Sapphire)

ABILITY: Primordial Sea

DILEMMA CITY

EGG GROUPS

STAT GROWTH RATE

HP	██████
Attack	██████████
Defense	██████
Sp. Atk	██████████
Sp. Def	██████████
Speed	██████

Damage taken in normal battles

Normal	×1	Flying	×1
Fire	×0.5	Psychic	×1
Water	×0.5	Bug	×1
Grass	×2	Rock	×1
Electric	×2	Ghost	×1
Ice	×0.5	Dragon	×1
Fighting	×1	Dark	×1
Poison	×1	Steel	×0.5
Ground	×1	Fairy	×1

Damage taken in inverse battles

Normal	×1	Flying	×1
Fire	×2	Psychic	×1
Water	×2	Bug	×1
Grass	×0.5	Rock	×1
Electric	×0.5	Ghost	×1
Ice	×2	Dragon	×1
Fighting	×1	Dark	×1
Poison	×1	Steel	×2
Ground	×1	Fairy	×1

Can be used in
inverse battles

Random Matchup (Free battle)

GAME FREAK CONCEPT ART

Pikachu Rock Star



1 Tail not included

2 Matching outfits

Summary

Pikachu Rock Star has the same aggressive red color in its jacket, belt, shoes, and the accessories over its eyes, which expresses the fighting spirit that burns within it. There is a heart-shaped mark at the end of its tail in its usual illustrations. This mark is shared by Cosplay Pikachu in all of its different costumes.

These Guides are available at **Walmart** and **Walmart.com**


PARTING SHOTS

ONE ON ONE WITH HAJIME TABATA

GAME DIRECTOR / SQUARE ENIX

WGC: What can *Final Fantasy* fans expect from *Final Fantasy Type-0*?

Hajime Tabata: The *Final Fantasy* series has always been about challenging things and trying new things. *Final Fantasy Type-0* takes that one step further in challenging the tenets of the series. We altered the gameplay systems so that it would be changed to an action-based system from a turn-based system. On another note, we've really challenged the content from a story standpoint in *Type-0*, and the biggest point is that we've tried to showcase the characters as living beings throughout the game. So, it's the first *Final Fantasy* that takes a mature approach to the franchise.

WGC: What kind of pressure and expectations do you feel working on an offshoot from the main *Final Fantasy* series?

HT: The biggest difference between the numbered titles and the spin-offs is that the motivations are very different. The main numbered titles will get released, no question. The spin-offs, unless they're worthy or valuable,

on an older technology like *Type-0* and replace aspects of it with the latest technology and deliver a meaningful experience. And looking at *Type-0* itself, we believed that since the combat system is very fast-paced, as long as we improved the graphical display of the game, it would be a meaningful experience on the big screen as well.

WGC: What do you think *Type-0*'s larger cast brings to the franchise that other *Final Fantasy* games haven't had?

HT: "Saving Private Ryan" was actually very educational for me and served as a reference in how one unit was considered the main character of the story. All of these individuals, with their unique personalities, made up this one entity and fought through the story and fought through a war together. That was a reference point for me when it came to *Type-0*'s story. Another reference point is more domestic in nature, where there's a method where you showcase various people in various circumstances and places and show what they're

THE FINAL FANTASY SERIES HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT CHALLENGING THINGS AND TRYING NEW THINGS.

they could potentially not be released, so that's a challenge that they face when going into development. As I worked on *Type-0* and *Final Fantasy XV*, there are these checkpoints with *Type-0* where we asked ourselves if we should continue or not. So, by overcoming all these checkpoints, we are able to release the game to our consumers. So the purpose of the spin-off is to deliver an experience you wouldn't normally have with a mainline title.

WGC: This was originally released for the PSP and never came to North America. Why bring it to Xbox One and PS4 now?

HT: We knew there was potential for this title on the new generation of consoles after the experience we had developing with DirectX 11 on *Final Fantasy XV*. We were able to see the potential of bringing a game that was created

doing at a given moment in time. You compile a story based on those various perspectives that exist in one world, so I felt adding the "Saving Private Ryan" take, as well as this domestic method and combining it to deliver a new kind of story experience would be very effective. In doing so, the various characters play a big role in showcasing the drama.

WGC: If you were tasked with making the final *Final Fantasy*, what kind of RPG would you want to do?

HT: Anyone who's taken up the responsibility of developing a *Final Fantasy* title goes into the project thinking that it will be the last *Final Fantasy*, whether that's *Type-0* or *XV*. So, the details of the game all differ in time, but the shared emotion is to give everything you have, give your all to the title you're creating at the time. ☺

Before game director Hajime Tabata makes his mark on the new generation of consoles with the highly anticipated *Final Fantasy XV*, he wanted to bring one of his beloved, previously Japan-only handheld titles to the West. We chatted with Tabata to get the lowdown on what *Final Fantasy* fans can expect in *Type-0* as it makes its debut on Xbox One and PS4.



VITAL SIGNS

OCCUPATION

DIRECTOR OF FINAL FANTASY TYPE-0 AND FINAL FANTASY XV

GAME HIGHLIGHTS

BEFORE CRISIS: FINAL FANTASY VII; CRISIS CORE: FINAL FANTASY VII; THE 3RD BIRTHDAY

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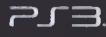


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